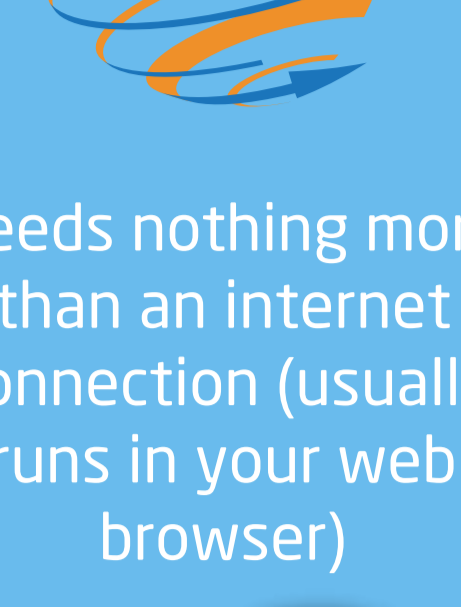


Watch out for fake Cloud

Many providers advertise "Cloud" software solutions which are not quite what they seem. This guide will show you what to look out for when considering Cloud CRM solutions.

Real Cloud CRM



Needs nothing more than an internet connection (usually runs in your web browser)

Fake Cloud CRM

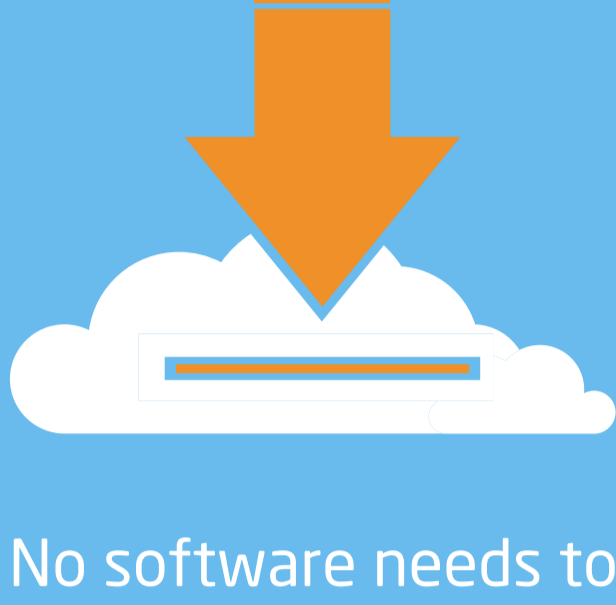


Needs additional software or servers installed in your office or home

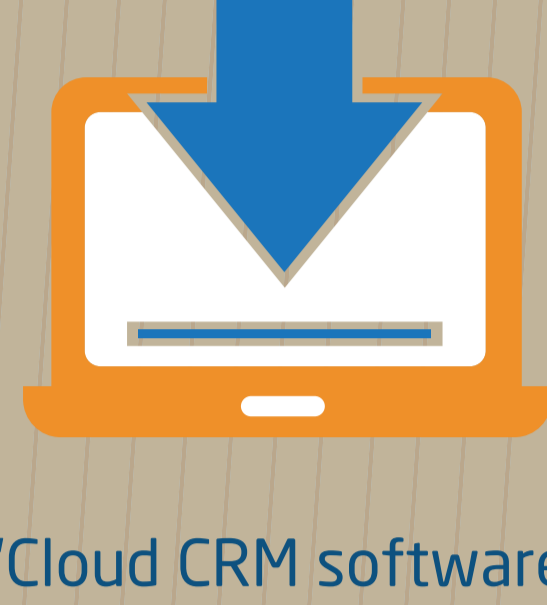
"83 percent of companies are frustrated with having to cut through marketing hype to find out which solutions are genuine cloud offerings and which are merely conventional hosting services with the word 'Cloud' added to the title."
ElasticHosts CIO Survey

Why it matters

- Easier to get up-and-running
- Less to go wrong
- Nothing for you to maintain



No software needs to be installed locally



"Cloud CRM software" is installed on your server or laptops

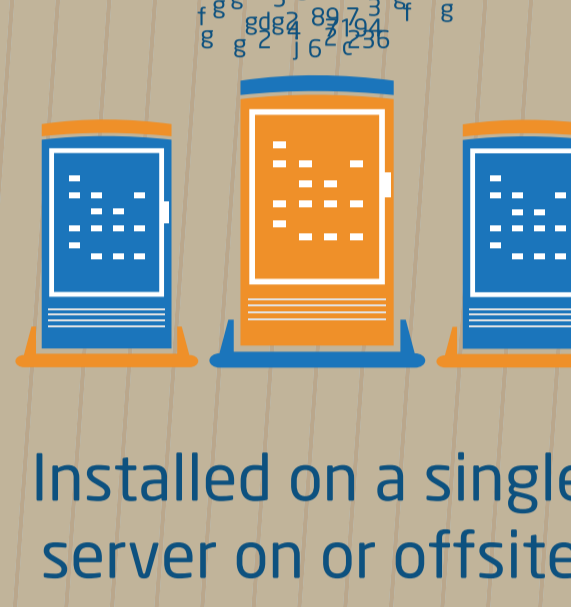
"Cloud washing (also spelled cloudwashing) is the purposeful and sometimes deceptive attempt by a vendor to rebrand an old product or service by associating the buzzword 'cloud' with it."
TechTarget.com definition

Why it matters

- If the software is installed locally, there are no benefits over traditional "on site" CRM solutions



Uses Cloud CRM servers spread across different geographical regions



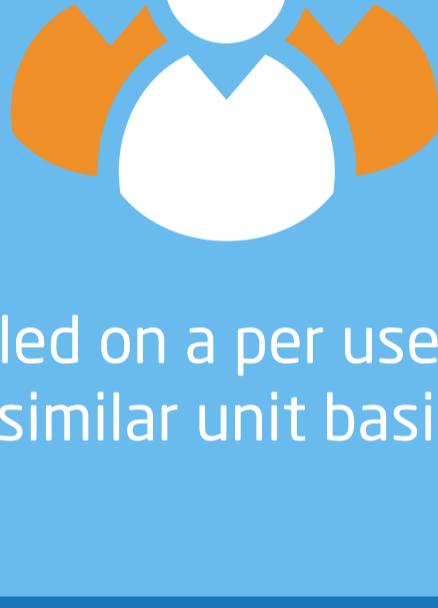
Installed on a single server on or offsite

"Part of the cloud computing mystique is that cloud services are resilient. Hardware devices fail, but the services continue running without loss of data."
Charles Babcock, Editor at InformationWeek

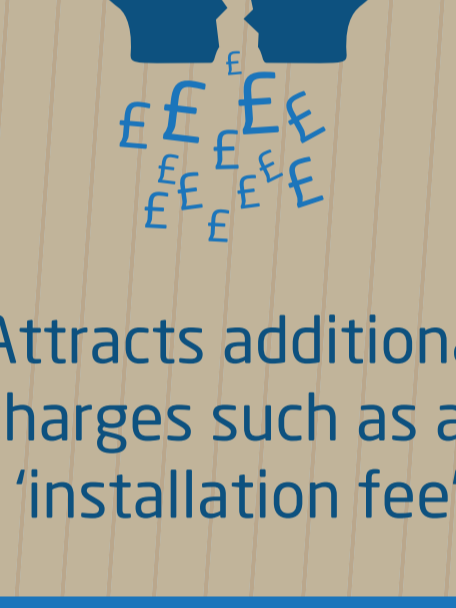
"Cloud washing refers to the practice of slapping the term 'cloud' on any old technology you have."
Larry Dignan, ZDNet

Why it matters

- Increased resilience in the event of a local disaster
- Less chance of data loss
- Increased up-time, allowing any-time, any-where access to your data



Billed on a per user or similar unit basis

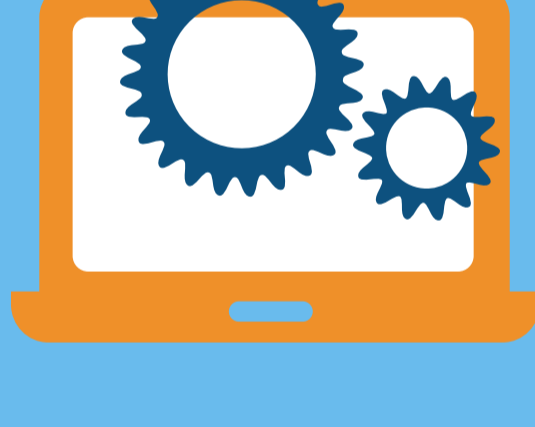


Attracts additional charges such as an 'installation fee'

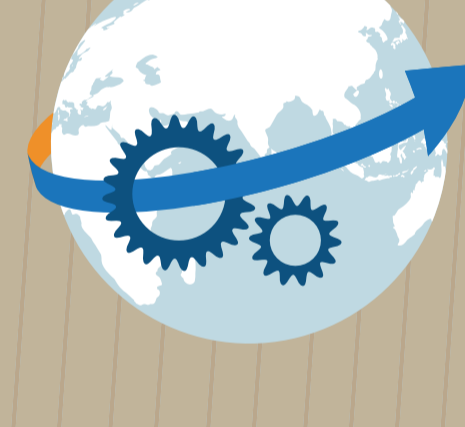
"To truly follow the cloud model, software should be sold based on usage metrics that make sense to the end user."
Thorán Rodrigues, TechRepublic

Why it matters

- True Cloud CRM solutions should only bill you for what you use
- A full charge breakdown is agreed in advance so your business knows what it will get for its money



Services can be added or removed according to your needs through a self-service portal



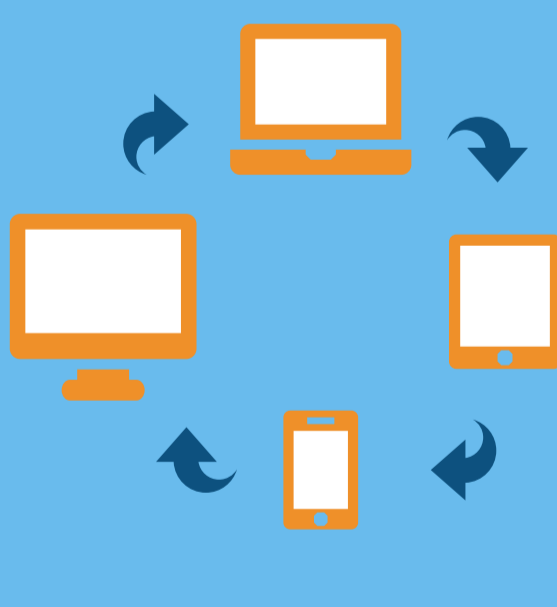
Services require significant manual intervention by the provider

"Over two thirds (67%) of respondents in the CIO survey had been offered "cloud" services that are fixed term, 40% had been offered services that were not elastic or scalable, and 32% had found that in many cases services were not even self-service."
Forrester Research

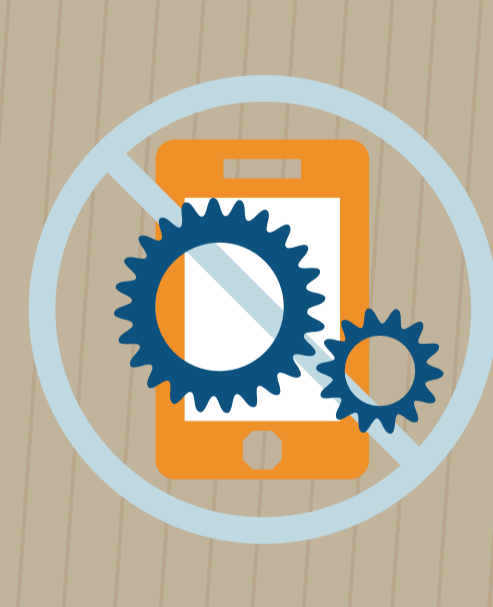
Why it matters

- Adding services as and when required means not having to wait for them to come online
- Self-service portals end problems getting through on customer helplines or dealing with language differences

- Service costs are cheaper as your Cloud CRM provider doesn't need to employ so many customer-facing staff



Access on-the-road from mobile phones and tablets is easy and seamless



Often needs additional configuration of a network VPN connection or 3rd party products to provide mobile access

"Gartner Research is reporting mobile CRM apps will grow 500 percent by 2014, another sign of a shifting market that has more to do with work getting done in the cloud more so than from a server behind the firewall."
Techcrunch.com

Why it matters

- CRM is only effective if your employees can keep it up to date with timely and relevant information

- Easy on-the-road access to your CRM system allows for increased productivity by ensuring

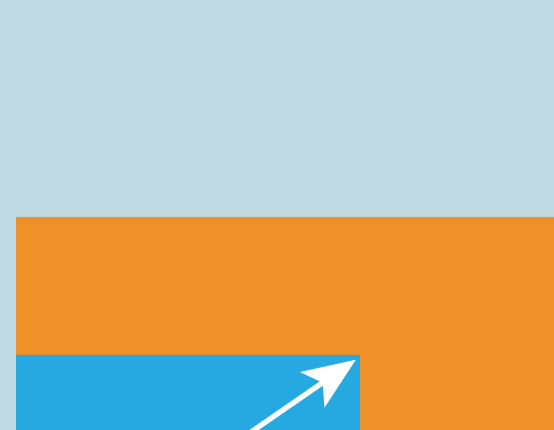
that your team can use the full range of CRM functionality and can see the latest customer information from anywhere, at any time

Takeaways



Cloud software offers a range of benefits - including cost savings, easier maintenance and better resilience.

Cloud software is also more flexible and scalable, meaning it's easy for you to update your systems yourself as your business grows.



Don't just take the vendor's word for it, though - not all supposedly 'Cloud' software is genuinely Cloud. Make sure they can answer all your questions about how they bill, where their server is installed and how easy the system is to update.